

## BOOK REVIEW

STEVE MANNING. FOREWORD BY RUDOLF JENNY. 2010. **Discovering New World Orchids.** (ISBN: 978-0-9565594-0-1, hbk). Steve Manning, 4 The Cedars, Nantwich, Cheshire, CW5 5GZ, U.K. (**Orders:** Steve Manning, 4 The Cedars, Nantwich, Cheshire, CW5 5GZ, U.K.; orchidsmann@uwclub.net). £45 (approx. US \$68.25), 669 pp., color throughout, 8 1/4" × 11 5/8".

Rarely do we find such an exceptionally large, carefully researched and documented, beautifully illustrated botanical volume. Where else do you find a chapter titled "POLITICS, INTRIGUE, and JEALOUSY—The story of *Masdevallia uniflora*"?

Even the preliminary pages are fascinating:

- "Do you have any idea who Baron von Tueckleim was or have you ever heard of Mr. Falkenberg?" (Foreward, Rudolf Jenny)
- "It is from South America that we obtain the best orchids we have. There were many romances that might be related of the adventures experienced by collectors of Orchids." (Introduction, F.W. Moore, *Orchid Review*, June 1903:163)

By all means, read the Introduction first. In part: "The amateur enthusiasts who were willing to spend fortunes on orchids and other tropical plants were often subject to that green-eyed monster Envy—as were the traders who sought to out-do their rivals, and whose expertise was at times lacking." And "Yet not all professionals were incompetent, not all amateurs were self-centered and avaricious. There was much co-operation between amateurs and professionals, between traders and customers."

Each chapter is well written and contains excellent information. There are beautiful illustrations of plants, photos, early illustrations of settlements and mines and flowers, and often maps, comments, bits of history, etc.

This is an exceptional volume, with exquisite illustrations, and carefully documented information. It is also a fascinating, "can't put it down" read. Some readers might be a bit daunted by a large, 669-page volume, but it is absolutely beautifully presented, carefully researched, historically informational, and an astonishing floricultural history of the New World orchids.—*Helen Jeude, Volunteer and Assistant Editor, Botanical Research Institute of Texas, Fort Worth, Texas, U.S.A.*